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Native Clergy For Mission Countries

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MISSIONARY APOSTOLIC

Press of the Society
For the Propagation of the Faith
343 LEXINGTON AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY



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Native Clergy for Mission Countries

THE Society for the Propagation of the Faith exists to provide funds, not men, for the mission field. In so far, however, as money can replace or multiply men we shall be within our sphere if we try to devise some means, at the present crisis, of providing against the fatal shortage of men which threatens the missions in the near future.

SLOW PROGRESS OF THE MISSIONS.

Friends of the missions—and all those who have the true love of God in their hearts are their friends—ask sometimes: “Why has not the Church made greater progress among infidels and pagans? For 1900 years she has sent apostles to all parts of the world, and yet out of fifteen hundred millions of human beings, hardly three hundred millions are in the fold. Yes, we have heard of the zeal and devotion of our missionaries, and of the wonderful results they obtain with the slender means at their disposal; but how slow their progress! At that rate, when will the world be converted?” And these good people are pained, and somewhat scandalized at the apparent failure of Christianity, which fact its enemies do not fail to use as an argument against its Divinity.

There are many obstacles to the diffusion of the Gospel besides the powers of darkness, as active to-day as in the time of our Lord. The object of this paper is to consider and to ask aid in remedying one of the causes which delay the christianization of the world; viz. the lack of missionaries.

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INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF WORKERS.

It is an indisputable fact that the number of workers in the mission field is out of all proportion to the task to be performed. A glance at the statistics of those countries which are still pagan or where Christianity is the religion of an insignificant minority will demonstrate our assertion more eloquently than any words. Although approximative, these statistics will give a fair idea of the state of affairs.

Japan and Corea

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Total population | 62,000,000 |
| Number of Catholics | 162,000 |
| Number of priests | 282 |

which means that there is one priest ministering to 575 Catholics and working for the conversion of 220,000 infidels.

China

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Total population | 420,000,000 |
| Number of Catholics | 1,820,000 |
| Number of priests | 2,380 |

or, one priest for 768 Catholics and 179,193 pagans.

Indo-China

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Total population | 42,000,000 |
| Number of Catholics | 1,035,000 |
| Number of priests | 1,081 |

or, one priest for 957 Catholics and 40,000 pagans.

India

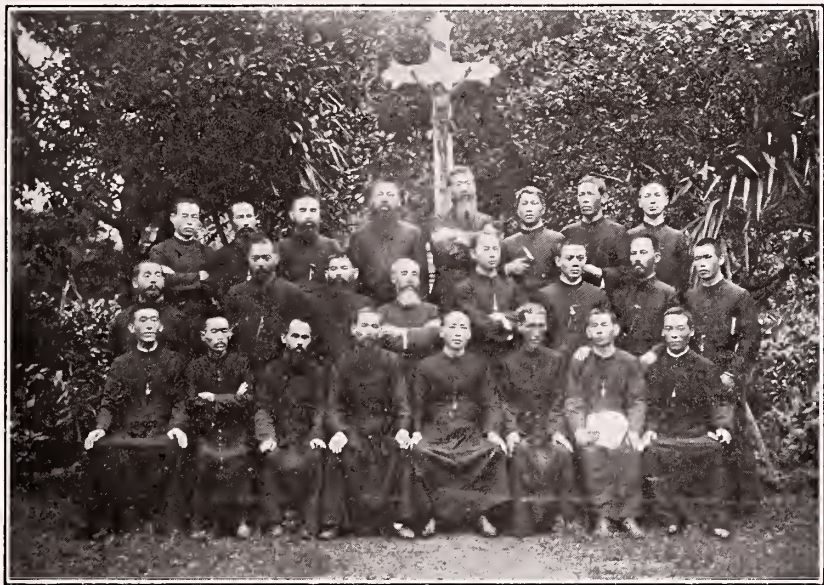
| | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Total population | 294,000,000 |
| Number of Catholics | 2,400,000 |
| Number of priests in mission districts | 2,800 |

or, one priest for 858 Catholics and 105,000 pagans.

Africa

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Population of mission districts | 157,000,000 |
| Number of Catholics | 750,000 |
| Number of priests | 1,903 |

or, one priest for 400 Catholics and 82,000 infidels.



NATIVE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF NAGASAKI (JAPAN).



STUDENTS OF THE SEMINARY OF CANTON (CHINA).



NATIVE SEMINARIANS OF TONKIN.



A CHINESE PRIEST TEACHING CATECHISM.

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Oceanica

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Population of mission districts | 4,000,000 |
| Number of Catholics | 130,000 |
| Number of priests | 360 |

or, one priest for 306 Catholics and 111,000 infidels.

In these statistics we suppose that every one of the priests is engaged in parochial work, which is not the case. Not a few of them are professors in colleges and seminaries; chaplains in hospitals; others are on the retired list on account of age, infirmity, etc., which reduces considerably the number of workers. As a matter of fact, in certain dioceses, for instance in India, it is not unusual for *one* priest to minister to *three* and even *four thousand* Catholics. If we keep this in mind and consider the obstacles to apostolic labors caused by poverty, climate, language, distances, etc., not to speak of continual opposition and occasional persecution, we may wonder that our missionaries report any progress at all.

EFFECTS OF THE WAR ON THE MISSIONS.

All over the world the Church is affected by the war. Its disastrous consequences are far-reaching and will be felt for many years to come. Our missions are not merely suffering, but their very existence in a number of places is threatened, not so much because of lack of funds as because of lack of missionaries.

At the beginning of the war three-fourths of the missionaries were of French nationality. Owing to an iniquitous law a large number of them were called to the colors. Whether those living under a foreign flag should have answered the call or not, it is not our purpose to discuss here. The question has been treated by a Japanese missionary in the May 1916 number of the *Catholic World*, and we entirely agree with him that under the circumstances they could not do otherwise; the good of the missions demanded it. The fact remains that a large number have left their missions, many never to return, and not a few to return broken in health if not in spirits. In most European countries the mission schools and seminaries are practically empty, and now that the United States has decided to take a hand in the great conflict, God grant that our own clergy and seminaries be not similarly affected by the war.

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However, even assuming that Providence will give the world a speedy peace; that new mission societies will arise; that the old ones will extend their recruiting activities; that the superiors of the missions will so place their missionaries as to cover the maximum ground with the minimum number—still for all these effects, the situation bids fair to be hopelessly out of hand within one generation, if we are forever to depend so largely on extra-mission sources of supply. But by fostering the largest possible number of vocations among the natives of the various missions themselves, we may solve an immediate problem; at any rate we shall be working toward the entirely desirable consummation of making the Church indigenous in mission countries. Bishop Seguin, P.F.M., of Kui-chou, China, writes: "If I am to insure the future of my mission I must strain every effort to prepare a native clergy now." This is the view taken by all the bishops in the mission field.

THE CHURCH WANTS NATIVE CLERGY.

The formation of a native clergy for the evangelization of heathen lands has always been the wish of the Church. In the sixteenth century St. Francis Xavier recommended it be done as soon as possible, and Leo XIII wrote in his letter to the Hindus (1893): "The zeal of the missionaries from Europe meets with many obstacles, the greatest being the ignorance of a language sometimes most difficult to master, and new customs and habits to which one is not used even after many years. It is evident that native priests will inspire greater confidence and their work will be followed by more lasting results."

This is the reason why when the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda entrusts to a religious order or missionary society a portion of the world to evangelize, it recommends the establishment of seminaries where natives will be trained for the priesthood and prepared to preach and minister to their countrymen. Native clergy alone will strengthen the position of the Church; it cannot be said to be solidly implanted in a country where there is no native clergy, even if all the inhabitants were converted to the faith.

Have the instructions of the Propaganda been faithfully obeyed? It is not our purpose to discuss this point. We may say in passing that certain superiors seem more anxious to re-

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cruit members for their congregations than for the secular clergy, on whom nevertheless rests the real organization of a diocese.

NUMBER OF NATIVE PRIESTS IN THE FAR EAST.

It must not be believed, however, that nothing has been done in this direction. At present there are 60 native priests in Japan and Corea; 830 in China; 700 in Indo-China; 850 in India and Ceylon. This is certainly a good beginning, but only a beginning. Multiplied by a hundred, the number of those native priests would not be too large for the gigantic task of converting the eight hundred millions of heathens or infidels of the Asiatic continent.

Let us observe here that the remarks which follow do not apply to Africa and the Islands of the Pacific and the South Seas. The question of a native clergy for those countries must be treated separately.

At present an urgent propaganda is being carried on by all missionary bishops for the increase of the native clergy to fill gaps in the ranks of European missionaries. We are not ignorant of the danger of going too fast in this important but delicate matter. Oriental characteristics are to be reckoned with, and while they do not invalidate our hopes they caution us to infinite patience and prudence. Still, cultivated the native element must be. It was always a duty; it has become a necessity. No missionary society or bishop but has made experiments and formed opinions as to the methods best calculated to attain an end which all alike admit to be essential. What concerns us is that, from our correspondence with the missions, we become increasingly alive to the fact that the financial situation is the chief bar to sure, if slow, success. Before showing how we can save the day, a few remarks on the training of the native clergy and on the quality of its work may interest our readers and stimulate their charity.

SEMINARIES IN MISSION COUNTRIES.

As early as the year 1664, Bishop Lambert de la Motte, one of the founders of the Paris Society for Foreign Missions, established at Juthia (Siam) a general seminary which would admit pupils from all the missions of Cochin-China, Tonkin,

China, India, Korea, and Japan. Twelve years later, in 1680, thirty natives had already been ordained to the priesthood, and the number of the faithful increased with remarkable rapidity.

In 1805 the seminary of Juthia was transferred to Pulo Penang, in the Malacca Peninsula. Owing to the foundation of a number of local seminaries by bishops desirous of sparing their clerics long separation from their relatives, costly journeys, change of climates, etc., the seminary of Pulo Penang has not the same importance as formerly, but there is probably no seminary in the world that has the honor, as this one has, of having given over a hundred martyrs to the Church, several of whom have been beatified.

In 1893 Pope Leo XIII founded a general seminary for India at Kandy, in the Island of Ceylon, and placed it under the direction of Jesuit Fathers of the Belgian Province. Up to date it has given over 150 priests to the Church in India, of whom two have been raised to the episcopacy, Mgr. Kaudatkil, coadjutor to the Vicar Apostolic of Ernakulam, 1911, and Mgr. Beekmayer, Bishop of Kandy, in 1912. Bishop Kaudatkil is a Syrian of the Malabar rite, and Bishop Beekmayer is a native of Ceylon and a member of the Benedictine Order.

Those two houses receive students from dioceses and vicariates which, being of recent foundation, have not as yet their own preparatory college and seminary.

THE COURSE OF STUDY.

When signs of vocation are observed, the children are sent to a preparatory school. The selection is always made among the children of families that have been Christian at least for two or three generations; it takes a long time to eradicate completely the virus of heathenism which has poisoned these poor people for thousands of years.

After two or three years of training, if the boys prove satisfactory they are sent to college, where their education is continued. They have the usual studies—grammar, geography, arithmetic, the sciences, and Latin, which they are taught to write accurately and to speak fluently. Latin is the language of the house, and all their philosophical and theological studies are pursued in that tongue. We often receive letters in Latin from Chinese and Japanese priests and we may say that few of our priests could equal them for correctness and elegance.



FR. GRIMARD, P. F. M., AND SEMINARIANS OF KWEI-CHOU, CHINA.



FR. MARTIN, O. P., AND SEMINARIANS AT BUI-CHU, TONKIN.



THE LATE BISHOP PAGNANI, WITH NATIVE PRIESTS OF KANDY (CEYLON).

The first on the right (seated) is the present Bishop of Kandy, Bishop Beekmeyer, O. S. B.



THE FIRST MASS OF A NEWLY-ORDAINED CHINESE PRIEST.

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Great attention is also given to the study of history and literature, that they may be in no way inferior to the scholars of the country.

After the classical course they spend a couple of years in the school for catechists. When they have graduated they are sent by the bishop for several years to teach the elements of Christian doctrine to little orphans, school children, catechumens, and patients in the hospitals. If their work has been satisfactory they are admitted into the seminary for a five or six years' course which comprises all the branches of ecclesiastical science.

Most native students would make good figure in our seminaries. The Oriental mind is subtle and grasps promptly philosophical and theological questions. Perhaps they do not assimilate as much as might be desirable, but this must not surprise us. Who is the American or European able to understand Oriental logic thoroughly? The difficulties we find in trying to read the Eastern mind, Orientals encounter in the philosophical systems of the Western world. With this exception, we may say that Japanese, Chinese, Annamites, Hindu seminarians make very good students.

Generally, in our houses of education, young professors begin to teach the minor classes and are raised by degrees to the higher courses; the contrary is the case in the Far East. They begin teaching Theology, then Philosophy, then the classics, and finally after several years, when they are thoroughly conversant with the language and customs of the country, are appointed to teach in the lower classes, grammar, Latin, etc. It is in fact much more difficult to understand the mentality of those boys and to place within their reach a teaching for which they have been little prepared by their early education than to teach young men who have spent several years in college and seminary and know Latin thoroughly; furthermore, a perfect knowledge of the language of the country is necessary, and it takes years of study and practice to acquire this.

DISCIPLINE AND RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

The rules of houses of education in the countries named are different from ours. Much more time is given to rest and recreation. No Oriental mind could stand a system of studies

as intense as that given to our students. And even with that moderation, how many clerics giving great hopes for the future have died at twenty or twenty-five from debility caused by study.

The discipline is not as severe as in our seminaries and needs not be. "When I was appointed professor in the seminary," writes a missionary who has spent a long life in that responsible position, "I was struck by the seriousness of the students; in the Far East the boy wants to be considered as a man and aims at acting as such. In fact it is not necessary to exercise much supervision over our students."

The religious training is of course the same as in our seminaries. Whatever the latitude under which they are born, whatever their mentality, all men suffer from the same consequences of original sin; they all have the same passions which must be regulated or guarded against. The same spiritual exercises as with us are made use of to attain that end: Mass, Communion, meditation, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, monthly recollections, annual retreats, etc.

To urge them to the love and service of God, not a few of these seminarians have incentives and family traditions unknown to us. In their youth, at home, they may have been told by their parents: "Your great grandfather suffered for the Faith; he was in prison for one or several years; he was tortured and finally strangled;" or "Your grandfather was beheaded because he refused to abjure Christ our Saviour!" In those countries where reverence, almost worship, for ancestors is so deeply implanted in the hearts of the people, it is unnecessary to add: "You must be worthy of your forefathers!"

There are seminaries where certain students have relatives or ancestors who have been raised to our Altars by the Church, and every day they may pray before their relics exposed to public veneration. There are others where students may visit occasionally a "Field of Martyrs"—spots where confessors of the Faith were executed not many years ago. The seminary of Ryong-San in Corea is only a few miles distant from the "Mountain of the Three Saints", where Bishop Imbert and Fathers Maubant and Chastan were put to death in 1839; seminarians go there for rest and meditation. The seminary of Keso in Western Tonkin is in the midst of cities and towns

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where many priests and Christians suffered martyrdom. From the college of Phu-senan in North Cochin-China it is only a few minutes' walk to the bridge of Boi-dau where Blessed Isidor Gagelin was strangled, he being the first martyr of the Annamite persecutions in the nineteenth century.

The Seminary of Nagasaki (Japan), which was begun in 1866 and which has already given 54 native priests, is located at Oura, opposite the Holy Mount where in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries hundreds of missionaries and Christians were put to death for the Faith after excruciating tortures. What an incentive for the students to visit in Nagasaki the places where 26 martyrs were crucified in 1597, among them a Mexican and Franciscan Brother, St. Philip of Jesus.

ANOTHER TRIAL.

Before taking the decisive step of subdeaconship, the seminarian must spend another year or two in some mission and labor with an experienced missionary, to learn all about the work, to try his strength and show what he may do later on. The test of the battlefield proves the soldier's real courage. If he returns with a favorable report he resumes his studies and is ordained in due time, generally not before he is 30 or 35 years of age and sometimes older. If the trial has not been satisfactory he may be given a second one with another missionary, after which a final decision is reached.

DO NATIVES MAKE GOOD PRIESTS?

We will let Bishop Reynaud, C.M., of E. Chekiang answer the question; he has been in China for forty-three years, has a number of native priests under his jurisdiction, and a seminary with 55 students; he is therefore well acquainted with the subject. "The native priests," he writes, "are always valuable auxiliaries. They work well and render great services to religion. They are almost indispensable because they understand far better than Europeans the language and customs of the country and the mentality, prejudices, aspirations, and defects of their compatriots. All this knowledge is very necessary for the progress of religion, and in regulating any difficulties that may arise in the direction of the vicariate.

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“To try to get on without the help of native priests would be to render ourselves unable to do good. They are like bridges between us and the people. The natives talk to them before they come to us. I might almost say they acclimatize the Faith in a country suspicious of all that comes from the outside world. This is, therefore, the work of works, the most urgent, the most efficacious, the most deserving. It is also the most expensive”

Bishop Perini, S.J., of Mangalore, India, wrote us recently: “The six native priests educated in my local seminary and ordained last September, have taken up work in various stations and show great zeal and ability. Thus the many sacrifices I had to make during their nine years of seminary life are fully recompensed by the excellent work they are doing.”

WORK OF THE NATIVE CLERGY.

The native priests work in the ministry either as assistants or pastors, no distinction being made between them and the European missionaries, although they are not subject to the special rules of the Religious Orders to which the latter may belong. They are sometimes at the head of important parishes of three or four thousand Catholics, as in India, or of one thousand, as in China, Japan, Corea. They are also employed as professors in colleges or seminaries. Some write or translate works of devotion or instruction. We cannot publish a complete catalogue, but here are a few titles: *Sebattiana parvadam* (Mountain of Prayer and Meditation) by Father Louis; *Motcha radari* (Passport for Heaven) by Father Rattinanader; *Ieju talei sarppa sangaram* (Destruction of the Seven Deadly Snakes) by Father Arokianadar. All these authors are Hindu priests.

We know of at least thirty volumes published by Japanese and twenty by Annamite priests. In Western Cochin-China Father Qui has published *Sach gam quant nam* (Meditations for Every Day of the Year) in five volumes. From a literary point of view the best known priest in Western Tonkin was Father Six. He wrote books of poetry much admired by Annamite scholars, and by his diplomatic abilities rendered invaluable services both to his country and the missions at the time of the conquest of Tonkin by France. He was appointed



BISHOP PERROS, P. F. M., AND THE NATIVE CLERGY OF SIAM.



BISHOP GIRAudeau, P. F. M., VIC. APOST. OF THIBET, WITH MISSIONARIES, NATIVE PRIESTS AND SCHOOL BOYS.



THE LATE BISHOP COQSET, C. M., OF S. W. TCHE-LI (CHINA), AND
SOME OF HIS NATIVE PRIESTS.



STUDENTS IN THE LIBRARY OF THE SEMINARY OF HANGCHAU
(CHINA).

honorary minister by the Annamite authorities and made an officer of the Legion of Honor by the French Government.

As far as moral character is concerned, we have no hesitation to say that the native priests of Japan, China, Indo-China, and India compare favorably with the clergy of America and Europe. They are pious, devoted and zealous workers. Defects of race, cast, temperament they have, like the clergy of any other country; they might be more learned, more humble, more disinterested, like many of our own clergy; but scandals are rare and defections not more numerous than with us. What the late Bishop Bonnard of Pondicherry wrote years ago is still true: "We may endeavor to improve our native clergy, but it needs no radical change in its constitution."

The native clergy of the Far East have written some glorious pages in the history of the Church. Frightful persecutions took place in those unhappy countries throughout the nineteenth century. In the provinces of Tonkin and Cochin-China alone, 79 native priests were put to death for the Faith between the years 1858 and 1862. One of them who had been recently ordained, Father James Nam, being urged to apostatize, exclaimed: "I, a priest, could trample on the Cross? abandon a Church of which I am a minister? Must I not practise what I preach? A Christian must die rather than give up his Faith, and who will die for the Faith if the priest does not set the example?"

In China and Corea numerous were the martyrs among the native clergy; eighteen were placed on our Altars by Pope Leo XIII in 1900, and seven by Pope Pius X in 1909.

NATIVE PRIESTS MAY SAVE THE CHURCH IN THEIR COUNTRIES.

The native clergy are not merely useful as auxiliaries to the missionaries; they may be called upon to replace them in case of emergency and thus save the very existence of the Church in their countries. In fact, history shows that they have done so on several occasions. At the end of the eighteenth century when the French revolution and the Napoleonic Wars prevented the training and sending of missionaries for many years, it was by two or three hundred priests that the ministry was continued in the Far East. The same thing is taking place at

the present time; owing to the departure of a number of the European missionaries, in many a place the practice of religion would be discontinued but for the native clergy who at the cost of great sacrifices are supplying the places of their absent brethren.

On the other hand history shows that if at certain periods persecutions succeeded in extinguishing the Church absolutely in a country, it may have been due to the lack of native clergy. In the fourteenth century there were no less than eleven archbishops or bishops, with a corresponding number of priests in China, all Europeans, and the Christians numbered more than one hundred thousand; but we have no record that an effort was ever made to educate any native for the priesthood. In 1483 the last missionary to that unfortunate country was put to death, and when two centuries later the first Jesuit priests arrived in Peking they found no traces of Christianity.

It is not unlikely that the Church of Japan would have been saved if St. Francis Xavier's advice to educate and ordain natives had been followed. This is confirmed by the fact that, despite the absence of clergy, the Faith was kept alive and certain religious practices observed for over two centuries among several thousands of Japanese, as was discovered in 1865 by the first French missionaries who had resumed a few years before the evangelization of the country.

WHY NOT A LARGER NUMBER OF NATIVE PRIESTS?

The question which will probably now occur to our readers is the following: If the native clergy of the Far East possess the qualities described above, if they are capable of rendering such eminent services, why not multiply their number, especially now that the supply of missionaries from Europe is threatened to grow considerably less?

It is in order to answer this question that we have presented the foregoing remarks to American Catholics and more especially to our brethren in the clergy, at the request of numerous bishops of those countries.

The reason why the native clergy is not more numerous in the Far East is not the lack of vocations, but the lack of funds to educate the candidates.

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Now, as in the time of our Lord, it is to the poor that the Gospel is preached. The proud Japanese, the rich Chinese, and the opulent Hindu have no inclination to listen to the missionary. The great majority of converts come from the poorest part of the nation. Parents therefore can pay practically nothing toward the education of their children; indeed the bishop must be grateful when they consent to deprive themselves of the valuable services these young men could have rendered in lessening the burden of the family.

From this it follows that from the time a boy enters the preparatory school, then college, then seminary, up to the day of his ordination he must be supported by the mission. For seminarians, we except the years of probation during which they are supported by the missionaries they assist. Of course the cost of maintaining a boy in college and a young man in seminary is less than here. But when we consider that some missions have one hundred, and in some cases as many as two hundred seminarians or college boys, it will be admitted that their support must be a cause of anxiety for the bishop. In fact, of late, several bishops have been obliged because of lack of resources to dismiss a number of their students. Not long ago a bishop from Japan wrote us: "I may be able to keep our seminary open for another year; after that, if Providence does not come to my rescue, I will have to close it."

WHAT IS THE COST OF MAINTAINING A STUDENT IN A SEMINARY?

It is impossible to give to this question an answer that will cover all the missions of the Far East, because the cost of living is not the same in all those countries. It is higher for instance in India or Japan than in China. After gathering much information on the subject we may state that an average of \$60.00 a year is sufficient to support a native student in the departments of Theology or Philosophy. We do not suggest any specific sum for the earlier years, because (as in our own colleges) the sifting process is not over at that time, and benefactors are apt to be permanently discouraged if the subject in whom they are interested happens not to develop a vocation. The total cost therefore would be \$360.00 for a course of six years in the seminary.

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Some may be surprised at the small amount required, but we must remember that in those countries the value of money is higher and the cost of living lower than with us; that the professors receive no salary, and that the young men live more frugally than we do. The comfort, not to say the sumptuousness, of certain American seminaries is unknown in Chinese and Hindu seminaries.

How many priests in the United States could spare \$5.00 a month from their salary and pay for the education of a young man who will one day be his brother in the priesthood? How many Catholics, not desirous to foster a sacerdotal vocation in their sons, could with that small amount help those who are anxious to give themselves to the Lord, but have not the means? Many parishes in the United States have never given a priest to the Church, although they have long been benefited by the services of one of God's ministers. As a mark of gratitude for that blessing could they not pay for a student in the field afar and thus make up for what they are unable to furnish from their own ranks?

The offer of supporting a student in the seminary is always gratefully accepted by our missionary bishops. But naturally they much prefer to have in hand the capital which will produce the necessary yearly amount. In other words the foundation of a burse in perpetuity is preferable to a monthly or even a yearly payment. The benefactor who has promised such payment may become unable to continue it, and the bishop who on the strength of that promise has received a student has to make up the deficiency.

WHAT IS THE COST OF FOUNDING A BURSE?

It is the ambition of every priest to "continue himself at the Altar". The burse is the obvious means. Now not every priest can afford the large amount required to produce an interest sufficient for the maintenance of a student in one of our American seminaries. In mission countries the amount is considerably less; besides which fact, many are rightly anxious to place their money where, without it, there will be no priest.

The amount to be required for one of these burses is a matter of considerable difficulty for reasons mentioned above. Various missionary bishops quote widely divergent figures, but



BISHOP MAQUET, S. J., OF S. E. TCHE-LI (CHINA), AND SIX NEWLY-ORDAINED NATIVE PRIESTS.



THE CHOIR OF THE PREPARATORY SEMINARY OF S. SHANSI (CHINA).



FR. LEO TING, C. M., ON AN APOSTOLIC JOURNEY—CHE KIANG (CHINA).



STUDENTS FROM THE SEMINARY OF S. SHAN-TUNG (CHINA), IN CHARGE OF FATHERS OF THE DIVINE WORD.

we must have a uniform rate for justice's sake. Taking therefore an average, we venture to state that a sum of \$1000.00 will found a burse in perpetuity for the training of an ecclesiastical student in any seminary in Japan, Corea, China, Indo-China, and India. Attempts to "underbid" us in these figures will of course be made; but on mature reflection we are convinced that this will be definitely to the detriment of the cause for which we are alike working.

Besides this desire on the part of the priests to provide for themselves a successor at the Altar, another burse-producing thought is that of a bishop or a seminary president who believes that the blessing of God will be on his own institution if from its more or less abundant resources it provides for the education of one native seminarian abroad. We know of at least one seminary in the United States that has already adopted this plan, having undertaken to provide by gradual small amounts paid yearly, a complete burse for a seminary in India.

Some time ago we had the visit of a Chinese bishop and in the course of a conversation on this subject he remarked: "It is easy for you to urge the formation of a native clergy, but not only do I have to pay the expense of their education, but also to support them, in part at least, after they are ordained. Where shall I find the means?" A bishop from Japan recently wrote us that he could ordain four or five priests every year but refrained from doing so as he did not know where to find the money for their support.

A native will of course live on much less than a European; in any part of the Far East an extra allowance of ten dollars per month will probably suffice, in some parts even less. Nevertheless, it is a heavy burden for a bishop when he has a large number to support, like Bishop Munagorri, O.P., who has 92 native priests in his Vicariate of Central Tonkin. As we remarked above, the Christians belong to the poorest part of the population and generally have large families; they can contribute but little to the support of their pastors.

Here again to pay every year (\$120.00) for the support of a priest in these missions, or to found a burse for that purpose (from \$1500.00 to \$2000.00), would be a meritorious act of charity. We know of an American bishop who for several

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years has been supporting two priests in China as a means of obtaining the blessing of God on his own diocese.

AN APPEAL.

This appeal is addressed especially to the clergy, but it might be heard by the laity as well. There are good Catholic parents of boys who seemed to be called to the priesthood but whom our Lord took before they reached the Altar. There is no more suitable memorial to the departed one than to provide for a substitute. Bishop Demange, P.F.M., of Corea wrote the following: "It is praiseworthy to build temples to the glory of God, but a far greater charity to give to the Church a priest who will build Him temples of souls. To be represented by an apostle who offers up each day of his life the Divine Victim, and who labors continually for the extension of our Saviour's Kingdom would seem to me a work of predestination."

Another bishop, asking for aid in supporting his native seminarians in China, indulges in this bit of fancy: "Often I picture what will take place when the soul of the clergy or the lay person who has given a priest to the missions appears before the Judgment Seat; possibly that soul will say: 'Truly, O Master, when on earth I was lacking in zeal and devotion; I was negligent of my duty; I committed errors through self-interest or the interest of my family. But Thou hast said that not even a glass of water given in Thy Name shall go unrewarded: therefore Thou wilt remember the souls saved by the priest who, through my assistance, has consecrated himself to Thee, and Thou wilt have mercy on me.'"¹

JOSEPH FRERI,

National Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

¹ The Society for the Propagation of the Faith will give further information to charitable persons interested in the training and support of native clergy for mission countries. It will assume all responsibility for the transmission of donations for that object and will see that the intentions of the donors are faithfully carried out.

Date Due

JUL 3 '57

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